

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 165

MARCH, 1935

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MONTH BY MONTH

THE COMING MONTHS. The months between now and the General Election are certainly going to be busy ones. The "Victory for Socialism" Campaign is to be intensified and alongside of this will take place more orthodox preparations for the General Election. Then we have the push for membership; the campaign among youth; a big agricultural campaign, and last but not least, the raising by the Movement of a great sum of money for the purposes of the General Election. Contemplating the programme it looks a pretty hefty one. But then, nobody in any constituency is expected to do all the work themselves. If a little of everybody's energy is devoted to securing other workers all the tasks can be made a good deal lighter.

YOUTH DAY. We have not sufficient data by us to be able to judge

whether or no the events connected with the first National Youth Day were as successful as the promoters desired or expected. Nobody, of course, is expected to acknowledge disappointment, but our own observations go to show that the mass of the Movement was not interested. This, of course, only indicates the nature of the task in hand, for the problem for us is not only to arouse and enlist Youth, but to bring the older sections of our Movement to a sense of importance in this matter. To get a really successful National Youth Day, much longer preparation and much more intensive work is necessary than was possible on the recent occasion. Further, we are not impressed with February as being a suitable time of the year. May would have been infinitely better, and is a particularly suitable month for the purpose. Our readers are reminded, too, that the problem is not only to form Youth Branches, but to keep them together and to ensure that such branches have not a mere skeleton existence.

THE "DAILY HERALD." There is one thing the "Daily Herald" apparently strives hard to do well, but which it succeeds in doing very badly; that is the reporting of week-end demonstrations. Certainly the "Herald" is not satisfying Labour folk by its present system of reports. It is obvious that the torrent of eloquence poured out at any week-end is incapable of adequate reporting in the Monday morning's issue, but one fails altogether to understand on what principle the subs work when one finds most important demonstrations ignored altogether, and space filled by a few disconnected sentences uttered probably at minor meetings. Under the present method a few leading speakers secure all the publicity every time to the entire exclusion of Labour's second-rank speakers, and even of many leading propagandists. The "Herald's" policy appears to be to create "stars" and report them only—a policy which has injurious effect on the Movement. In our opinion the space devoted to the wisecracks of a few star leaders would be best utilised if it mirrored the actual life and doings of our Movement. What the speaker said is often less important than that three thousand persons gathered together in a certain town to demonstrate for Socialism. But the "Herald" does not appear to think so. If, however, a man who really knew the Movement was put in charge of the job of summarising and picturing Labour's speaking activities over the country each week-end, a far more interesting and effective page of news might be secured.

SPEAKERS AGAIN. Our comments in last month's issue regarding the booking of "National Speakers" aroused considerable interest. We have received a number of communications backing up our complaint. The evil appears to begin when easy promises are made

by certain speakers to oblige their friends, without any reference of the matter to the Propaganda Department of the Labour Party. Certain people apparently have a lot of friends, and so we see the spectacle of leading speakers being crowded into certain favoured constituencies month after month. The result of this unplanned distribution is dissatisfaction and disorganisation all round. We ourselves have recently had the experience of running a Regional Demonstration in connection with the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign only to find

competition opened up with us by one of the constituencies who took no part in the central affair, but who had apparently succeeded in booking one of the "Stars"—certainly without the aid of the Head Office, for this particular constituency has had no end of "Stars" during the last two years. It appears to us that certain speakers ought to be told quite plainly the injury which they are unwittingly inflicting on the Movement. At the same time certain greedy and over-reaching Parliamentary candidates need a very straight talking to.

SMALL PARTIES: NO RULES

As our readers are of course aware sets of rules have been passed by the Annual Conference of the Party, applicable to all types of Divisional Labour Parties, and also to Women Sections, Youth Sections, Delegate Parties in Municipal Boroughs and Urban areas, combined Labour Parties and Trades Councils, etc. The Party constitution anticipates the formation of Polling District Committees in rural districts, and for these bodies no specific rules have been prescribed.

In actual practice, and in the present stage of the Party's development, there are in existence a large number of organisations in urban areas, and even sometimes in Municipal Boroughs, which partake of the nature of Polling District Committees, and which are not organised under the prescribed rules for such places.

Many of such bodies, and most Polling District Committees too, are spoken of as Local Labour Parties, and it sometimes becomes a matter of difficulty to identify a local Party's standing from its name.

The matter is somewhat simplified in regard to several types of local organisations by the fact that the Party sets of rules are, by the national constitution, *applied* to local organisations, and therefore the general principles embodied in them are binding on the organisations to which they refer, unless an amendment of the rules has been made and approved.

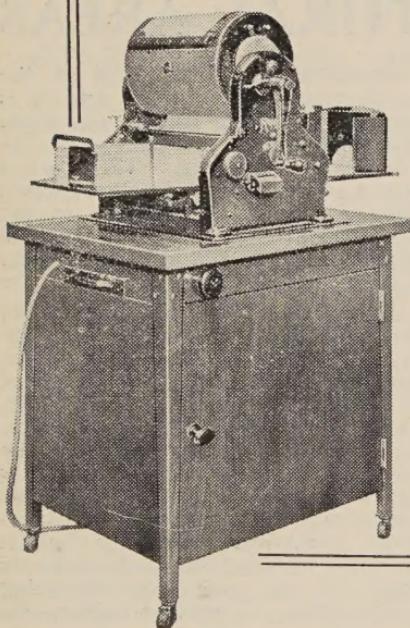
As there are no sets of rules for Polling District Committees, it becomes of interest to discover what fundamental rules relate to them,

Each Polling District Committee, notwithstanding the non-adoption of any specific rules, is bound by the rules of its Divisional Labour Party, and the rules of the Labour Party. It is noteworthy that the rules of these bodies cover every question likely to arise in regard to the following questions: Party objects; affiliation fees and contributions; apportionment of finances; participation in management; selection of local and Parliamentary candidates; and authority for the settlement of disputes.

It will be seen therefore that the omission of any specific rules is by no means a serious matter, for virtually everything but the method of conducting business is already provided for. A few simple Standing Orders might be all that is necessary. In conclusion it should be pointed out that there are many Local Labour Parties whose constitution is that of Polling District Committees, who ought to be working under Set C. rules. These rules anticipate the existence of delegate organisations rather than general meetings of members. Present working in these instances is of course only a temporary expedient.

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A RULE to SAFEGUARD FUNDS

In our issue for March, 1934, we published an article on safeguarding local Party funds and assets. This is an extremely important matter, and recent events have borne in upon us that local Parties do not give adequate attention in their rules to contingencies which may arise and do arise raising this question.

The break-up of sections or local Parties is not an infrequent happening, but when, as sometimes happens, funds and assets are in the hands of local officers, and these persons are disposed to be either obstinate or dishonest, Party rules are found to be inadequate to deal with the occasion.

In our article last year we strongly advocated a special rule to deal with this situation, and in view of recent experiences we reprint that rule with the strong advice to all local Parties to incorporate it in their present constitution.

"The accounts of the Party shall be kept in the form approved by the Party, and all funds, books or other

property in the hands of any Committee or Section shall be, and at all times remain, the property of the — — Labour Party, and shall be returned to the officers appointed as the Party may direct. On any Committee or Section becoming defunct, or upon the same being expelled or dissolved by the Party, the whole of the property or assets in the hands of such Committee or Section shall be handed over to the Party forthwith."

JANUARY COPIES WANTED. Urgent Appeal.

Will readers who have spare copies of our January issue please send same immediately to the Editor?

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SUMMER WORK in AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Every agricultural constituency or constituency with an agricultural area is now looking forward to its summer propaganda.

Let the determination this year be to make the propaganda thorough. In the past, the effect of a good deal of propaganda in agricultural areas has been lost owing to its fleeting character, the unexpectedness and infrequency of visits from candidates, or of meetings, is almost everywhere noticeable and to be deplored.

We believe that in planning meetings the first thought should be to secure a certain *regularity*, for regularity leads to contact, and contact leads to membership. It is far better to plan visits two or three times to the same place, announcing the next visit on each occasion than to dissipate propaganda efforts over an area which is too wide.

If this means that some parts of a constituency must be neglected it is, in our opinion, better to do this than to scamp the work in other places. Two meetings in one place have more effect than one meeting each in two places, and this may be taken as an almost universal rule.

Summer propaganda in the villages nowadays generally means a car for the candidate and chief speakers. Poor indeed is the constituency where this cannot be arranged, but on the other hand, few constituencies are so well off as to have sufficient cars to convey *all* the speakers and workers who ought to do their bit in the country.

This fact, however, prompts the well planned expedition to some village or other to which there is a possibility of fixing up a bus party; such parties are popular. A bus party can not only hold a meeting, but canvass the village and distribute literature. Such parties, too, generally require catering for tea, and contacts with the inhabitants are thus established. In fact, organised parties of this sort have a great value and help to create confidence.

This is the time of year, too, to enlist the aid of cyclists. The cyclist's

enthusiasm is at its height in the early months of spring. And it is amazing how little Labour uses those many millions of cyclists who are its friends and members. There are a dozen services which a well organised corp of cyclists can render in the countryside; anyway, now is the time to book them up and to form the local Labour Cycling Corp.

Up-to-date Parties will, of course, take the loud speaker into the country. The loud speaker is of service not only at village green meetings, but it seems to reach workers in the field, in isolated hamlets, detached cottages, and so forth. To those Parties who have not yet bought a loud speaker we would urge that the use in the countryside alone justifies the purchase and brings back value for the purchase money. The loud speaker is quite the best means for advertising either indoor or outdoor meetings in the country.

Mention must be made of literature distribution. Lots of people talk of distributing literature in the country, but if they have done it they have probably only distributed in the villages. In most country areas literature distribution to every house is almost a physical impossibility in any reasonable time available. A good plan was tried by one of our friends last year. Envelopes were addressed to *all* the electors, and those not distributed were put through the post. This was an expensive method, but it at any rate resulted in a 100 per cent. distribution.

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MEMBERSHIP

MEANS MAN-POWER

"CARRYING" YOUR MEMBERS IS A FATAL POLICY

We heard a local secretary say the other day "if we had more members we should be unable to collect off them."

The inference seemed to be, that the enrolment of new members involved an additional tax on the resources of present members of the Party, and we have heard the same thing said before with more emphasis. Hence this article. We have even heard it alleged that it was *no use* setting out on a membership campaign because there would be nobody to collect from the members and nobody to "look after them"!

It seems to us that no more mistaken notion of the purpose of membership could exist than that stated above. People who believe that membership is something to be carried on the backs of a caucus—to be collected from and catered for—simply do not understand or appreciate the functioning of democracy.

After all, one of the purposes of enrolling more members is to relieve the existing workers in the Party of some of their work. Unfortunately, we find it true that there are still people in the Party who prefer to over-work themselves rather than surrender the reins, or any part of their power, to newcomers.

It was a queer kind of democracy which we found functioning in a certain constituency not long ago. In that constituency there are nearly thirty thousand Labour votes, but less than three hundred members are enrolled in the Party. Thus one person in a hundred participates in directing the policy of the Party, and in selecting the Parliamentary candidate, the other 99 being expected to merely fall in and follow. Friends who are content with this position simply do not trust democracy. To suggest that the enrolment of another two thousand members would mean "more work" for the odd three hundred is sheer futility.

This matter carries a lesson not only to those who have memberships yet to build, but to those who have built them.

Don't "carry" your membership. Not every new member can be persuaded to come along and take a share in Party work, but there is always a proportion ready and willing to do so.

Every new member should be given an *opportunity* to function, and the best way of doing this is to present a list of the activities in which a member may engage, putting no compulsion or undue pressure on the individual to volunteer for anything.

An excellent form for this purpose was produced in our issue for December, 1932. In the same issue we mentioned that the Reading Labour Party had delivered three thousand cards entitled "Doing My Bit for Socialism." The cards listed sixteen ways in which a member could assist. Of the three thousand cards delivered 970 were returned, and no fewer than 4,850 spaces were filled in with promises of specified work. These promises were definitely tested at a later date, and proved to be substantial and genuine offers.

These facts entirely dispose of any suggestion that new members entail more liability and responsibility for old members. They prove beyond question that if one gives the opportunity to members to function a big section of them will do it.

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a successful drive for membership was indulged in during the year, resulting in a net increase of 1,300 members. A total of 2,931 members was reached on December 31st, after deducting all losses owing to deaths, lapses and removals. The total income from members' subscriptions during the year was £289 4s. 2½d. For the handling of this membership a full-time collector is employed, in addition to the Labour Agent. It is interesting to note that out of an income of £1,402 almost £1,000 has been raised from members and supporters.

SOME REPORTS and BALANCE SHEETS

We are only able this month to give a selection of the many annual reports which have reached us. Unfortunately, we have once again to draw the attention of our readers to the difficulty in understanding the accounts of some Parties as presented. Items are not sufficiently explicit. A number of Parties make no mention of their total individual membership, while others hide away members' contributions under the heading of affiliation fees. Members' contributions are not affiliation fees, and the relationship of Local Parties to their Divisional Party is not that of affiliated organisations. However, the majority of the reports which have reached us speak of progress, and in the main annual reports are now given with greater detail.

We are glad to note that the Swindon Labour Party, who won the Parliamentary seat for Socialism during the year, have also increased their individual membership. The income from this source last year was £101 Os. 8d. The Party are distributing 10,000 "Victory for Socialism" leaflets per month and our friends are obviously not resting on their laurels. A vigorous attempt is being made to capture the Local Council.

The Durham Divisional Labour Party also increased their membership during the year, and the membership now stands at 972. The accounts and report of this Party are presented in admirably printed form.

The Spennymoor Divisional Party's annual report shows that the membership now stands at 1,340, with every prospect of further increase. The affiliated membership amounts to over 7,000. Over 90,000 "Victory for Socialism" leaflets have been distributed. The County of Durham evidently means to wipe out the disgrace of 1931.

The problem of a dwindling electorate which confronts Central Borough Divisions is well illustrated by the figures contained in the report of the Central Sheffield D.L.P. During the year 337 new members were

made, but no fewer than 570 good paying members were lost owing to removals caused by slum clearances. A further 286 were lost from other reasons. It is creditable that 1,893 paying members were on the books at the close of the year—a slight increase over the previous year. The number of membership cards issued during the year was, however, 2,749. Income from membership after deducting membership charges (presumably cost of cards) amounts to £154 11s. Od.

The report of the Bristol East D.L.P. as usual makes instructive reading. This is a live and vigorous Party, whose reports and accounts are presented with great detail, covering every field of organisation. The figures presented by a Party of this type reach impressive totals, and the balance sheet contains entries of properties worth over £5,000. Our friends have considerable responsibilities, but the membership is being kept well together, and Bristol East is one of those seats which most people regard as safe for Socialism.

The Darlington Party are to be congratulated on an income of £162 9s. 5d. last year from members' subscriptions. We are not able to gather from the returns what membership this represents. The Local Party has joined whole-heartedly in the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign and have distributed over 84,000 leaflets over a period of eight months. This is work that will tell.

The Reading Labour Party is another Party whose figures impress. Subscriptions and grants during the year total £237 7s. 10½d. while we note that the income from a Bazaar totalled £520 15s. 3d., yielding apparently a profit of well over £300. The Party's total income is over £1,800, and the membership stands at 2,904. The capture of the Borough Council for Labour is now definitely in sight by the victories gained during the past year.

From the annual report of the East Lewisham Labour Party we gather that

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A NEW HEAVEN OR A NEW EARTH COSTS MORE THAN 2d. PER YEAR!

When the Labour Party launched its new constitution in 1918 a fundamental mistake was made in assuming that big membership could be built up on small annual contributions. The constitution adopted at that time laid down a minimum contribution of one shilling per year for male members and a minimum contribution of sixpence per year for female members, from which contributions twopence per member was to be remitted to Head Office.

The failure of cheap membership has been pointed to over and over again in the "Labour Organiser." The mistake was realised years ago by up-to-date Parties who instituted the penny per week contribution, and it was virtually recognised by the Party itself in 1929 when these minimums were left out of the revised rules then adopted.

In another direction however, the constitution of 1918 put us on the wrong track, for there was then laid down a minimum rate of twopence per member as the affiliation fee from Trades Union Branches. It is notorious that a minimum tends to become the maximum, and this low fee of twopence per member has hung round the necks of most Local Labour Parties during all the years that have elapsed.

We believe it is true that the majority of Divisional Labour Parties still receive no more than twopence per member from their affiliated organisations, and indeed in a good many cases the original stipulation that this was a minimum has been dropped altogether, and twopence has become the standard. Many Parties realise that such contribution is altogether insufficient for the purpose of up-to-date organisation and this realisation has, in fact, acted as a stimulus in obtaining individual membership. Because of this in many cases attempts to raise the affiliation fee have not been made.

We are of the opinion that it is high time that local Parties sought to educate their affiliated organisations as

to the desirability of paying a fee commensurate with the nature of the task to be undertaken. We have no hesitation in characterising twopence as being a contemptuous sum per individual, however much it may aggregate in the lump. Anyway, it is not sufficient for the great purpose of creating a machine which is to win this country for Socialism.

That this work of education can be accomplished is proved by the experience of some Parties who for many years have operated a high affiliation fee. In Birmingham, for instance, the affiliation fee is fourpence, though this is reduced to threepence per member if the affiliated organisation is also affiliated to the Trades Council. The Trades Council affiliation fee is also fourpence, and the rules provide that where an organisation is affiliated industrially and not politically, or vice versa, the fourpence affiliation fee must be paid, but an organisation affiliated for both purposes, pays only threepence per member to each fund. This plan has worked well, but even to-day it is recognised that the political affiliation fee is insufficient for its purpose.

In Sheffield and a number of other towns, the affiliation fee is fourpence per member, and instances may be given where the affiliation fee is sixpence per member, in at least one case it is one shilling per member.

Attempts to raise the affiliation fee without undue preparation are to be deprecated. Where the fee is raised without preparation, and merely by resolution the effect frequently is that under-affiliation takes place.

The Labour Party has set an example in this matter, for whenever the affiliation fee has been raised a considerable amount of consultation has first taken place with prominent Unions. The raising of the national affiliation fee has, it must be confessed, not been universally successful, though this is mainly due to the industrial depression, and the facts on the whole have proved that the raising of the fee has been worth while.

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Our advice to Local Parties is to consider the matter very carefully. We believe that a general minimum of fourpence is desirable, and that there are no obstacles in the way which cannot be overcome, but deputations to Trades Union Branches are necessary, and the rules of each body should be studied. In any case, now is the time to move in the matter, for with the General Election in view it must be obvious that not only is more money required, but that closer contact with the Unions should be made. Raising the affiliation fee may be a means of securing this contact, and certainly of securing consultation and strengthening our mutual bonds.

We should be glad to hear from other readers who operate a higher affiliation fee in their areas.

COLLECTION OR OFFERING?

A Story.

Mr. B. Howells, who presided at a packed "Victory for Socialism" Demonstration held at Chesterfield on March 10th, told a good story, perhaps not a new one, when announcing the collection; and he certainly scored a point.

The story was about a little boy, his dog, Fido, and the Christmas dinner. Fido was forbidden the feast and spent as happy a Christmas as he could in his kennel outside. Johnny, however, was mindful of Fido, and out of his own generous helping of turkey he reserved a goodly portion of the best for the dog. This did not please mother, who insisted on Johnny eating his turkey, on the promise, however, that Fido should have his dinner later.

When the time came for Fido's dinner, to Johnnie's surprise and dismay he was given a collection of scraps to take to the kennel. Then Johnny expressed himself, "Poor Fido, I had saved for you an offering; take this—it's *their* collection!"

Mr. Howells rubbed home the point that it was an offering that was expected. He got it. The collection was £10 8s. Od.

MONTHLY NEWS SHEETS—
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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Whither India—by Morgan Jones, M.P. Price One Penny. The Labour Party

We welcome this valuable new pamphlet by Morgan Jones, which meets the needs of many enquirers within the Party. The pamphlet deals with the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform which will form the basis of the new India Act, with the Minority Report of the Labour members, and with the proposals of the "Diehard" Salisbury group. The fundamentals of the Indian problem are lucidly explained.

JACK CUTTER

TAKES A DAY OFF AND REVIEWS THE FASCIST FORCES

Let us now consider the B.U.F. and its originator, Sir Oswald, known in Hyde Park, London, the Bull Ring, Birmingham, the Eigg Market, Newcastle, the Mound, Edinburgh, and on Glasgow Green as Sir Ozzy Mozzy.

With all the talk in Fascist circles about new methods and new technique in political organisation, perhaps we can pick up a wrinkle or two. That was in my mind when I started to explore the "new technique," but I can find nothing new at all. On the contrary their methods are antiquated survivals of the days when political organisations were secret societies. In fact there is a great deal in the Fascist organisation which savours very much of a secret society: the rest is the military organisation of a private army.

The B.U.F. uses pass-words, sealed orders, signs and similar hocus-pocus. Its officers are ranked like some ridiculous Ruritanian Army. Its "defence" force, entirely militaristic, is clearly organised for aggression rather than defence and probably with some grandiose scheme for a "March on London" when the Big Shot thinks the time is ripe for a coup d'état.

Opposite is a table showing Fascist organisation at a glance. Have a look at it and ask yourself if this is a political organisation or a private army. Electoral machinery, ward organisation, planned canvassing polling arrangements—all are absent and it is clear that Fascism has no time for such things. It plans only for a sudden seizure of power à la Mussolini et à la Hitler. Yet Sir Ozzy and his minions coo as gently as sucking doves in the police courts!

The idea is that this type of theatrical organisation will appeal to the middle class youth of the type that dashes about the country in a high-powered sports car, belongs to the nearest Aero Club, whose hero in literature is Bulldog Drummond and whose old school tie marks the spot upwards of which he is numb.

Mosley has evidently no time for

the working class. He tried for a time to secure a working class following. Up to a year ago, for instance, the B.U.F. was trying to be very active among Trade Unions and the unemployed.

A secret circular sent out by Mosley to his branches declared:—

"The Fascist Union of British Workers is an industrial organisation. The part it plays towards the official Fascist Movement may be compared to that of the T.U.C. in relation to the Labour Party. . . . Fascists should be elected through the Trade Union Branch Committees, a valuable move in the organisation of the Fascists fighting for power. Such Fascist members of Trade Union committees will be able to stop grants of money which would otherwise go to the Labour Party. . . . Members of the F.U.B.W. should take part in the activities of all unemployed associations, centres, mayors' funds, even N.U.W.M., pressing forward the policy of the F.U.B.W. and making efforts to be elected to committees of such associations."

This circular was apparently received in a lukewarm way by the branches, for very little was done; practically no progress was made and the few Fascists who found their way into Trade Unions were either converted or became fed up and left. The F.U.B.W. was stillborn and the parent has turned attention to other work.

In another secret circular dealing with the Co-ops some interesting things were stated. Here is one gem: "The leader has given instructions that we regard the Co-operative Stores as a useful means of organised distribution, but they must submit to regulations and control in the Fascist state in the same way as every other public institution." In other words the Co-ops. would be free to do as they were damn well told by the capitalists.

The B.U.F. believes in organised press propaganda and their methods are not unknown to Socialist pioneers. They have a Press Propaganda Dept.,

THE FASCIST ORGANISATION WITH BADGE RANK SIGNS.

PROPAGANDA		ADMINISTRATION		DEFENCE FORCE	
Purple flash over two bars	National Propaganda Officer	Blue flash over two white bars	National Administration Officer	Red flash over two yellow bars	First Commander
Purple flash over one bar	Senior Propaganda Officer	Blue flash over one white bar	Deputy National Administration Officer	Red flash over one yellow bar	Second Commander
Purple flash	Propaganda Officer	Blue flash	Zone Administration Officer	Red flash	Third Commander
Three purple bars	Deputy Propaganda Officer	White flash over two white bars	Area Administration Officer	Yellow flash over three yellow bars	Sub-Commander
Two purple bars	Assistant Deputy Propaganda Officer	White flash over one white bar	Administration Officer	Yellow flash over two yellow bars	Commandant
One purple bar	Assistant Propaganda Officer	White flash	Deputy Administration Officer	Yellow flash over one yellow bar	Sub-Commandant
		Three white bars	Branch Officer	Yellow flash	Company Officer
		Two white bars	Deputy Branch Officer	Three Yellow bars	Sub-Company Officer
		One white bar	Sub-Branch Officer	Two yellow bars	Section Leader
				One yellow bar	Unit Leader
				Black shirt	Fascist

which supplies localities with a whole series of letters. No. 1 is a provocative letter apparently anti-Fascist in tone which is sent to the local press. No. 2 replies to it, signed by the local officer. Replies to No. 2 are sent to H.Q. and suitable rejoinders are sent out for the local Fascist robot to sign and submit for publication.

In their correspondence there are veiled references to the work of "Department Z," which appears to be the secret service unit of the gang.

A queer lot, indeed! There is an air of unreality about them and their literature. Their pastimes, poses, parades and even their pseudo-indignation about tythes and similar social questions somehow does not seem real. The overwhelming vanity of Mosley and the futile platitudes of his chiefs of staff seem to have no relation to the real problems of the day. Their whole movement seems to be indulging in an orgy of shadow boxing, energetically sparring up to an unseen foe and making frantic punches at the empty air.

When people warn me darkly about the future of Fascism and remind me that 30 years ago Socialism was scorned and ridiculed I reply that Socialism will win through firstly because it means something vital, and secondly because Socialists got down to their job and organised their vote. Mosley's gangsters have no political philosophy which means anything at all to the mass of the people and they can teach us absolutely nothing about political science. Their present underground organisation of the middle class may bring them recruits of a sort, but only a movement which expresses a mass urge can endure. Mosleyism is an interesting by-product of the transition period between capitalism and Socialism, born of the bewilderment at the collapse of established standards. It is just that and nothing more.

JACK CUTTER.

The L.O. wants
1,000 NEW READERS
Will you help?

SHOULD WE DECORATE OUR LITERATURE SELLERS?

Every practical literature seller will agree that the bulk of literature sales at meetings is made by persons taking round the literature and at the stalls.

We are indebted to Sir Stafford Cripps for a suggestion. According to Sir Stafford, Local Parties might well try an imitate, at larger meetings at any rate, the daintiness which distinguishes the chocolate and programme sellers in the picture houses. Why not little trays for the literature? And if distinctive costumes are out of the question, at least a little coloured bandeau round the forehead might be indulged in.

After all audiences appear to take to this sort of thing, and we have litt'e doubt that sales would be improved. In this instance we think it is a case of the end justifying the means. It certainly would.

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Smith-Dorrien Road, Leicester

HERE AN ORGANISER TILTS AT TIME-WASTING AND MAKES FOUR GOOD SUGGESTIONS

"On a point of order Mr. Chairman." With these well-worn words some zealous and well-meaning comrade initiates a discussion lasting perhaps 15 minutes. Then the correspondence is carefully read, from the first word at the top of the page to the final dot at the end of the signature. Some of it may be quite out of date; but it must be read. After a long discussion on what "somebody" ought to be doing to combat Fascism, the time has arrived to catch the bus home.

Meanwhile, there are many thousands of electors in the area, who will vote at the next election and as yet have not fixed political ideas. So busy are we, however exciting each other in our own little circle about matters of routine or administration, that we have little time to give to the job of making converts to Socialism in a systematic way. In many cases we are so intent on the Party machine itself, and in criticising its working, that we have almost forgotten what the machine is for.

How much time and energy has been spent in the last twelve months by the local Party in discussing domestic affairs, in proportion to the main job of planning to get in contact with electors? At a meeting of 40 people, one hour spent in unnecessary discussion, means 5 days at 8 hours a day of Socialist energy wasted. More than enough time to deliver our monthly issue of *Victory for Socialism* leaflets.

This does not mean that all discussion of domestic affairs is waste of time. But with the biggest electoral battle in our history approaching, we ought to consider planning out the time members give to the work of the Party in proper proportions. There should be economy of effort, and a sense of the value of each piece of work done. Every effort should be used to produce some definite result. Before speaking or acting, we might consider whether our speech or action will help forward the cause of Socialism; will assist in winning the approaching election. If it is a discussion on machinery, make it a positive proposition to establish or improve a piece of necessary

machinery. If it does none of these things, it is hardly worth doing just now.

The following suggestions on the use of members time, may be worth considering.

- (a) Let the Executive Committee do practically the whole of the routine and administrative work of the Party, and report to each full meeting. Allocate a definite time at the full meeting for discussion of the Executive Committee's Report. This will save reading all correspondence etc. As the time is limited, most members will object to futile discussion.
- (b) Allocate at least one hour at each full meeting for an address by the prospective candidate or some other speaker, on some phase of "Socialism and Peace." Invite the Press to be present for this purpose. At the time fixed for the speaker to commence, ordinary business to be adjourned until after the speech.
- (c) Form a "Discussion Circle" to discuss and debate "Socialism and Peace," etc. This should be open to all members, but speakers, canvassers, etc., should be specially invited. This should serve, not only to familiarise members with the Party programme, but to give an opportunity to members to take part in discussion.
- (d) Plan out the Party work for the next six months, and get the plans on paper. Weaknesses and lack of balance are much more easily discernable when set out in writing. The Women's Sections might be asked to arrange special propaganda for women, and the League of Youth, special propaganda for Youth.

These four suggestions will not, of course, entirely solve the problem of wasted time. If they assist in curbing the activities of the habitual time-waster, these few words will have served a purpose.

A. ROSE (Southampton).

BOUNDARY CHANGES and EXTENSIONS

ANOTHER PROBLEM FOR LOCAL PARTIES

One of the natural difficulties of seeking to build and maintain political organisations based on the boundaries of civic authorities is that these boundaries do not remain constant, and further that they are sometimes very arbitrary and divide up natural communities.

These troubles have always been with us, but they have become more acute of recent years owing to (1) the amount of building which has taken place (2) the numerous extensions of Municipal boundaries and (3) the operation of the Local Government Act, 1929.

The Labour Party's constituency organisation is primarily based on Parliamentary boundaries, and so great has been the effect of the three factors to which we refer, that in some parts of the country there is hardly a constituency unaffected by encroachment from the towns, while internally almost all constituencies are affected.

Altogether a pretty kettle of fish has developed during recent years. The redistribution of 1918 is out-of-date, and there is no early prospect of another redistribution. Under the circumstances Parties have to make the best of the situation.

We do not propose to say much regarding the changes among the local authorities in County Divisions, for where matters are internal to a particular Division the Divisional Party always has an opportunity of smoothing out difficulties.

Even under the best conditions natural communities may be divided among two or more local authorities, while fresh natural communities are constantly springing up which are split in the same way.

The problems of organisation which arise are matters for treatment by the Divisional Party. Questions as to the best method of collecting contributions, running social efforts and so forth, require to be dealt with according to local needs; the only

fundamental principle which must be universally applied is that the selection of Local Government candidates must be confined to those resident in the area or registered as electors.

No Party can afford to ignore the existence of natural communities and the fact that civil boundaries do not always coincide with them. The catering for such areas must be an exception from general rules.

Regarding one set of complications which has arisen since 1918, more definite advice can be given. We refer to the extension of Municipal Boroughs in the areas of other Parliamentary Divisions. This is a problem where the circumstances are by no means uniform throughout the country. In the majority of cases the extensions of Municipal boundaries merely mean the taking in of a community which has long been virtually a part of the Borough so far as civic interest and social intercourse is concerned. There are, however, other places where communities, whose main interests still lie in the County outside, have been taken into Boroughs and such places present an awkward problem.

There is a Party rule which must be observed in all these cases, i.e., that the membership cards held must be those of the Parliamentary Division. Beyond this principle there is no general rule which can be laid down for working the organisation in the overlapping area, and the matter is one for local arrangement.

Where a community taken over is virtually a part and parcel of the Borough, it is no use the County Divisional Party blinding itself to this fact. Like the Rating Authorities it must console itself to a certain loss of potential effort and money raising possibilities. Generally speaking, the County Party should be content with a share of the members' subscriptions, coupled with an undertaking by the Borough Party to maintain the local organisation, and to place it at the disposal of the County Division when

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the Parliamentary Election takes place. The observance of such a condition would of course be a matter for watchfulness.

In the more unusual case where a community taken into a Borough still retains strong partiality for its old association (like Lot's wife) no objection can be made to the County Divisional Party undertaking to maintain the organisation, and to place it at the disposal of the Borough Party

for the purpose of Municipal Elections. But we see difficulties in the operation, and certainly in the continuance of such an undertaking.

Altogether, the problem we have outlined above is one of the thorniest local problems at present confronting Divisional Labour Parties. It is desirable that a solution should be sought in each area in the spirit of goodwill, and not in that of beggar my neighbour !

ABOUT the WOODCRAFT FOLK

In article after article we have striven to rouse our Movement to its neglect of opportunity among the children. 1,300,000 children are organised in Militarist or Imperialist organisations; less than 50,000 are in Socialist or Co-operative organisations.

We have not succeeded yet, but we shall persevere till we do !

Meantime, we have published for our readers' benefit particulars of such Socialist and Co-operative work among children as does exist.

As promised, we now give our readers details concerning the Woodcraft Folk, extracted from an article, previously referred to, by Mr. Leslie Paul :—

"It is the cause of The Woodcraft Folk which I would like to plead. For this is an organisation capable of immense development along Socialist educational lines, yet whose work is either unknown or completely ignored by the Socialists whose battle it is fighting. It is, of course, a Socialist organisation. The fact that it works chiefly with the Co-operative movement strengthens rather than weakens its Socialist outlook, for the Co-operative movement is the economic wing of working-class organisation.

"Superficially, it resembles the Boy Scouts: at least, it is capable of giving children all that they enjoy in the Scout and Guide movements save the military and imperialist elements.

"It runs week-end camps, long summer camps, winter and summer hikes, festivals and corroborees, parades and demonstrations (those who witnessed its recent march past at the Crystal Palace International Co-operative Festival will have some idea of its strength and possibilities). Its educational work is based upon handicrafts, dramatics, games, songs and dances and other forms of robust activity. Its instructional work ranges from world history and evolution to industrial history and unemployment and war and peace. Its members wear a green costume—easily made

in the home—and make their own banners and flags and decorate their own tents. It lacks no colour, that's clear.

"Its main age groups are Elfin Folk—under ten; Pioneers—ten to sixteen (the strongest section of the movement); Hardihood Groups—sixteen upwards. It has a democratically controlled national organisation, working very efficiently, though on most inadequate funds, and manages to issue a monthly for children, 'The Pioneer,' and two other magazines, a Year-book and a host of books and pamphlets. It is, in fact, ripe for very rapid development, granted the Socialist enthusiasm and some good voluntary work in constituencies.

"I believe that local Labour Parties—yes, and even Trade Union branches—could do no finer work to win the next generation for international Socialism than to promote the establishment of Pioneer Groups of the Woodcraft Folk in their locality.

"Those million and a half youngsters in Imperialist organisations are a challenge and a menace to our cause. Much might be done to meet that menace if Socialists would spare time and thought to the organisation of children in the one organisation capable of meeting the challenge—our own Woodcraft Folk."

THE BETTING AND LOTTERIES ACT, 1934

DRAWS AND SWEEPSTAKES

As our readers who watched the proceedings of Parliament last year are doubtless aware the Betting and Lotteries Act, 1934, covers a far wider field than that which directly interests this Journal.

The law of gaming generally is outside our scope and because of this the first twenty sections (Part 1.) of the Betting and Lotteries Act, will not be dealt with here. This part concerns the restriction of betting on tracks and elsewhere, and the question of licensing. Our only observation need be that Part 2 of the Act (relating to lotteries and prize competitions) with which we are concerned, seems to consolidate previous enactments to a greater extent than Part 1. of the Act; the Sections in Part 2 contain virtually the whole legislation on the question dealt with.

As to what constitutes a bet or a lottery nowhere in this or any other Act is either a "bet" or a "lottery" defined. But certain games of chance have been declared to be "lotteries."

Judges' decisions, however, have been clearer and a lottery may be said to be a distribution of prizes by chance, which chance has been paid for. Draws and sweepstakes obviously fulfil these conditions, as in the past have many newspaper competitions.

The interest of our readers lies chiefly in an ascertainment of what has been prohibited by the new legislation concerning draws and sweepstakes and this article is written with the object of assisting our readers to an understanding of the present position.

In the past, members of Local Labour Parties have made substantial sums out of the promotion of draws and lotteries of various kinds; and, while the majority of Local Parties have now dropped these things altogether, our observations lead us to the conclusion that certain Local Parties are still continuing to run these affairs at heavy risk.

However, the first thing one should get clear is, "What is a game of chance?" *A competition is not illegal unless chance mainly enters into the distribution of the prizes.* In every case it is a question of fact whether

a competition is a game of skill or of chance. If a competition is purely a game of skill there is no need to worry about the Betting and Lotteries Act.

On the other hand, it is desirable to see what the Judges have had to say upon these matters, for a disguised lottery is a very common thing. Most promoters of lotteries try to make the thing look innocent. Many Labour promoters have sought to camouflage a draw by a condition that the payment for the ticket was to be taken as a donation to the local Party. This we have always thought to be a somewhat childish pretension, and one which would not hold water. The fact that a person without a ticket could not participate in the draw, of itself disposed of the pretension that purchase of a ticket was not purchase of a chance.

But the commoner method of camouflage has always been to pretend that the competition was a game of skill. That competitions *may be* games of skill is very clear, and those of our friends who are desirous of running affairs of this character should indulge their ingenuity in this direction. A competition which is a game of skill is *not a lottery*. It is just a competition, and quite legal.

As to what the judges have to say then, there was a case where the competitors were required to forecast the number of births and deaths in London during a certain week. This was held by the Court of Appeal to preclude a conviction under the Lottery Act as some slight skill was required. We should not like to rely too much on this decision. In another case the judges held that guessing the total of other people's guesses (a favourite plan) was illegal. So also it was held that the choice of a missing word by an Editor (in a Missing Word Competition) did not substantially differ from drawing out of a bag. Further, even if there is some scope for skill, but the *actual conditions of the competition* are such that the result must depend on chance, the competition will still be held to be a lottery.

The new Act contains a fresh prohi-

bition which is important to proprietors of local Labour newspapers. It is unlawful to conduct in or through any newspaper or in connection with any trade or business competitions in which prizes are offered for forecasts of the result of a future event or any other competition, success in which does not depend to a substantial degree upon the exercise of skill. This express legislation for newspapers must not be taken as detracting from, but merely re-enacting the prohibitions contained elsewhere in the Act.

Entertainment Lotteries.

Considerable expectation has been aroused in many quarters by sections of the new Act which appear to allow a limited legality for certain types of lotteries. Some of our friends have to our knowledge seized on these exemptions in the hope that they fully justify a continuance, or at most only a slight curtailment, of past activities in these matters. The fact that they have not yet been discovered or prosecuted is giving them a false sense of security from which presently there will be an awakening.

In our opinion the value of the exemptions in the Act are almost nil for any Party which is desirous of raising a substantial sum of money by means of a draw. Far better to keep clear of the Lotteries Act and make one's competition a game of skill throughout.

It is perfectly true that the Act gives an exemption for small lotteries incidental to certain entertainments. A lottery promoted as an incident to an entertainment is not to be an unlawful lottery, but the conditions are that the whole proceeds, after deducting expenses shall be devoted to purposes other than private gain; none of the prizes are to be money prizes; not more than £10 may be spent in the purchase of prizes; nor must tickets be sold. The result must be declared on the premises on which the entertainment takes place, and during the entertainment.

The entertainments to which this section applies are Bazaars, Sales of Work, Fêtes and other entertainments of similar character. Certainly, with a permitted lottery one can sin thoroughly, but it is obvious that the limitations above mentioned are of little value except to churches and kindred organisations.

Section 24 of the Act also gives an

exemption to what are to be known as private lotteries.

"Private" Lotteries.

A private lottery is one confined to members of one Society established and conducted for purposes not connected with gaming, wagering or lotteries, or to persons all of whom work on the same premises, or to persons all of whom reside on the same premises. A lottery conducted under the conditions laid down is deemed not to be an unlawful lottery.

The conditions are (1) that the sale of tickets shall be confined to members, (2) that persons promoting the lottery must be authorised in writing (this means that a Secretary must have the signatures of his local E.C.) (3) the proceeds shall be devoted to the provision of prizes and for the purpose of the Society; (4) there must be no written notice or advertisement of the lottery except one exhibited on the Society's premises, or on the tickets themselves; (5) tickets must be all of one price; (6) each ticket must bear the name and address of each of the promoters, and a statement regarding the limitation of sale, also a statement that no prize will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the ticket was sold; (7) tickets must not be sent through the post.

We are aware that some of our friends are attempting to run draws which are alleged to comply with the above restrictions. We shall be very much surprised, however, if any Party succeeds in the attempt, and at the same time succeeds in keeping out of the law.

A curious definition of Society is given in the Act. A Society is deemed to be a Club, Institution, organisation or other association of persons by whatever name called, and *each local or affiliated branch or section of a Society shall be regarded as a separate and distinct Society.*

We anticipate considerable trouble from the above quoted definition. If we read it aright no Divisional Party may sell draw tickets to local or affiliated organisations, and no local Party may sell draw tickets to its central organisation. Each are deemed to be separate and distinct Societies, and although each have a right to run a lottery it would appear that they must not sell the tickets outside their own membership.

BETTING and LOTTERIES ACT, 1934

Part II.

Lotteries and Prize Competitions.

Section 21. ILLEGALITY OF LOTTERIES.—Subject to the provisions of this part of this Act, all lotteries are unlawful.

Section 22. OFFENCES IN CONNECTION WITH LOTTERIES.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, every person who in connection with any lottery promoted or proposed to be promoted in Great Britain or elsewhere—

- (a) prints any tickets for use in the lottery; or
- (b) sells or distributes, or offers or advertises for sale or distribution, or has in his possession for the purpose of sale or distribution, any tickets or chances in the lottery; or
- (c) prints, publishes, or distributes, or has in his possession for the purpose of publication or distribution—
 - (i) any advertisement of the lottery; or
 - (ii) any list (whether complete or not) of prize winners or winning tickets in the lottery; or
 - (iii) any such matter descriptive of the drawing or intended drawing of the lottery, or otherwise relating to the lottery as is calculated to act as an inducement to persons to participate in that lottery or in other lotteries; or
- (d) brings, or invites any person to send, into Great Britain for the purpose of sale or distribution any ticket in, or advertisement of, the lottery; or
- (e) sends or attempts to send out of Great Britain any money or valuable thing received in respect of the sale or distribution, or any document recording the sale or distribution, or the identity of the holder, of any ticket or chance in the lottery; or
- (f) uses any premises or causes or knowingly permits any premises to be used, for purposes connected with the promotion or conduct of the lottery; or
- (g) causes, procures or attempts to procure any person to do any of the above-mentioned acts, shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) In any proceedings instituted under the preceding sub-section it shall be a defence to prove that the lottery to which the proceedings relate was such a lottery as is declared by any subsequent section of this Part of this Act not to be an unlawful lottery, and that at the date of the alleged offence the defendant believed, and had reasonable ground for believing, that none of the conditions required by that section to be observed in connection with the promotion and conduct of the lottery had been broken.

(3) Proceedings under sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph (c) of sub-section (1) of this section in respect of any matter published in a newspaper shall not be instituted except by, or by direction of, the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Section 23. EXEMPTION OF SMALL LOTTERIES INCIDENTAL TO CERTAIN ENTERTAINMENTS.—(1) A lottery promoted as an incident of an entertainment to which this section applies shall be deemed not to be an unlawful lottery, but the conditions specified in the next succeeding sub-section shall be observed in connection with the promotion and conduct of the lottery, and, if any of these conditions is broken, every person concerned in the promotion or conduct of the lottery shall be guilty of an offence unless he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge.

(2) The conditions referred to in the preceding sub-section are that—

- (a) the whole proceeds of the entertainment (including the proceeds of the lottery) after deducting
 - (i) the expenses of the entertainment, excluding expenses incurred in connection with the lottery; and
 - (ii) the expenses incurred in printing tickets in the lottery; and
 - (iii) such sum (if any) not exceeding ten pounds as the promoters of the lottery think fit to appropriate on account of any expense incurred by them in purchasing prizes in the lottery,

shall be devoted to purposes other than private gain.

- (b) none of the prizes in the lottery shall be money prizes;

- (c) tickets or chances in the lottery shall not be sold or issued, nor shall the result of the lottery be declared, except on the premises on which the entertainment takes place and during the progress of the entertainment; and
- (d) the facilities afforded for participating in lotteries shall not be the only, or the only substantial, inducement to persons to attend the entertainment.

(3) The entertainments to which this section applies are bazaars, sales of work, fêtes and other entertainments of a similar character, whether limited to one day or extending over two or more days.

Section 24. EXEMPTION OF PRIVATE LOTTERIES.—(1) In this section the expression "private lottery" means a lottery in Great Britain which is promoted for, and in which the sale of tickets or chances by the promoters is confined to, either—

- (a) members of one society established and conducted for purposes not connected with gaming, wagering or lotteries; or
- (b) persons all of whom work on the same premises; or
- (c) persons all of whom reside on the same premises,

and which is promoted by persons each of whom is a person to whom under the foregoing provisions tickets or chances may be sold by the promoters and, in the case of a lottery promoted for the members of a society, is a person authorised in writing by the governing body of the society to promote the lottery.

For the purposes of this section, the expression "society" includes a club, institution, organisation or other association of persons by whatever name called, and each local or affiliated branch or section of a society shall be regarded as a separate and distinct society.

(2) A private lottery shall be deemed not to be an unlawful lottery, but the following conditions shall be observed in connection with the promotion and conduct of the lottery, that is to say—

- (a) the whole proceeds, after deducting only expenses incurred for printing and stationery, shall be devoted to the provision of prizes for purchasers of tickets or chances or, in the case of a lottery promoted for the members of a society, shall be devoted either to the provision of prizes as aforesaid or to purposes which are purposes of the society or, as to part, to the provision of prizes as aforesaid and, as to the remainder, to such purposes as aforesaid;
- (b) there shall not be exhibited, published or distributed any written notice or advertisement of the lottery other than—
 - (i) a notice thereof exhibited on the premises of the society for whose members it is promoted or, as the case may be, on the premises on which the persons for whom it is promoted work or reside; and
 - (ii) such announcement or advertisement thereof as is contained in the tickets, if any;
- (c) the price of every ticket or chance shall be the same, and the price of any ticket shall be stated on the ticket;
- (d) every ticket shall bear upon the face of it the names and address of each of the promoters and a statement of the persons to whom the sale of tickets or chances by the promoters is restricted, and a statement that no prize won in the lottery shall be paid or delivered by the promoters to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket or chance was sold by them, and no prize shall be paid or delivered except in accordance with that statement;
- (e) no ticket or chance shall be issued or allotted by the promoters except by way of sale and upon receipt of the full price thereof, and no money or valuable thing so received by a promoter shall in any circumstances be returned; and
- (f) no tickets in the lottery shall be sent through the post.

(3) If any of the conditions specified in the preceding sub-section is broken, each of the promoters of the lottery and, where the person by whom the condition is broken is not one of the promoters, that person also shall be guilty of an offence:

Provided that it shall be a defence for a person charged only by reason of his being a promoter of the lottery to prove that the offence was committed without his knowledge.

Section 27. POWER TO ISSUE SEARCH WARRANT.—Any justice of the peace, if satisfied by information on oath that any premises are being used for the purpose of the commission of an offence under this Part of this Act in connection with a lottery or proposed lottery, may grant a warrant under his hand authorising any constable, at any time or times within one month from the date thereof, to enter, if necessary by force, the said premises and every part thereof, and to search for and seize and remove any documents, money or valuable thing found therein which he has reasonable ground to suppose are on those premises for any purpose which constitutes an infringement of any provision of this Part of this Act relating to lotteries.

Section 28. INTERPRETATION OF PART II.—(1) In this Part of this Act the following expressions have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say:—

"money" includes a cheque, banknote, postal order or money order;

"newspaper" includes any journal, magazine or other periodical publication;

"ticket" includes, in relation to any lottery or proposed lottery, any document evidencing the claim of a person to participate in the chances of the lottery.

- (2) For the purposes of this Part of this Act—

references to printing shall be construed as including references to writing and other modes of representing or reproducing words in a visible form.